

CONFIDENTIAL

U. S. NAVY DEPARTMENT

F-246

AIDE FOR INFORMATION

9th, 10th & 11th NAVAL DISTRICTS.

503 FEDERAL BUILDING

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS.

(COPY TO COMMANDANT)

Jan. 25, 1918.

FROM: Aide for Information, Ninth, Tenth, Eleventh  
Naval Districts.

TO: Director of Naval Intelligence.

SUBJECT: John Andrew Becker.

REFERENCE: O N I, letter Dec. 1, 1917. #20976 - 11.  
Letter from this office, Dec. 29, 1917. F - 346.

1. Following the apprehension of John Dell Claude and Raymond L. Dunn, Deserters from U. S. Naval Training Station, Great Lakes, Ill., and their being brought to Chicago from St. Louis, Mo., an examination was conducted at the Twentieth Street Police Station, this city. Following is a description of the assault on John Andrew Becker, which occurred on the night of Nov. 10, 1917, as given by John Dell Claude,

2. The Cornelison referred to in the following report is B. W. Cornelison, Seaman 2nd Class, Company D, Gunner's Mate School, Great Lakes Naval Training Station, Ill. Cornelison is 19 years of age, 6 feet in height, 155 Lbs weight, Black hair, eyes, and complexion. Cornelison's father is a farmer residing in the vicinity of Muskogee, Okla.

3. It is the opinion of Claude that if Cornelison cannot be located at the Training Station, or at his home, he can be located in New York city, through the police.

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Cornelison and I (Claude) were standing in front of the Chicago & Northwestern Ry Station, Madison and Canal Sts., at about six o'clock on the evening of Saturday, Nov. 10, 1917. Neither of us had any money, and Cornelison suggested that we rob someone. Cornelison left me, and soon returned with a pint bottle of whisky, which some tramp had procured for him. Cornelison stated that we would use the whisky to lure some one into an alley, where we could then rob him.

Cornelison approached a fellow who was standing nearby, and asked him if he would like a drink of whisky. The fellow replied that he would, and then Cornelison approached me, as

though I were a stranger to him, and asked me if I would like a drink of whisky. I said I would, and the three of us left the vicinity of the station. I did not speak to the third party, nor did I pay any attention to his appearance. Cornelison asked me to walk behind, and he walked in front, and at an interval of about twenty feet, we proceeded to a series of alleys between Washington and Madison Streets, and Jefferson and Desplaines Streets. We went by the way of Madison St., and after reaching Jefferson Street, we turned north until arriving at the entrance to this series of alleys, where we entered. No words were spoken during this walk.

We had proceeded only a short distance into the alley when Cornelison offered the bottle of whisky to the stranger, and as the latter raised it to his lips, I struck him on the right temple with a twelve inch piece of lead pipe, which we had previously procured for the purpose. At the time I struck him, I was facing north, Cornelison was facing south, and the third party was also facing north. The stranger fell immediately, and I dropped the piece of pipe. Cornelison, however, picked it up, and struck him twice on the back of the head. We dragged the unconscious body into the shadow of the buildings, and began going through his clothing. I secured \$3.30 from the left watch pocket of the trousers, and Cornelison obtained a watch from the right watch pocket of the trousers. I then removed the pea-coat and neckerchief. The coat bore the stenciled name of J. A. Becker. (At this point in the examination Claude was confronted with the coat which he had been wearing since the time of the assault, and formally identified it as that which Becker wore, and which he had removed from Becker, at the time of the assault.)

After removing the coat and neckerchief, the watch, and the \$3.30 in cash, Cornelison and myself immediately left the alley, by way of Washington Street. We turned back on Jefferson St., and when we arrived at Madison St., we proceeded immediately to the Cumberland Hotel. I registered there under the name of T. D. Brown and Cornelison gave the name of Weir. We occupied room eight. After dividing the money, we discussed the ~~assault~~ and at the suggestion of Cornelison, we returned to the scene of the assault. It was about ten o'clock when we arrived at the alley, and although we lit matches in an effort to discover Becker, we could find no trace. We returned to the hotel and remained there until the afternoon of the next day.

At about five o'clock on the afternoon of the next day, we again returned to the scene of the assault. We saw nothing, but met a man who asked us if we had heard of the jackie who had been killed the night before. This was our first knowledge of the death of Becker.

I remained in the company of Cornelison until the following day. I kept the pea-coat, since Cornelison already had one of his own. I gave the neckerchief to a girl friend, and Cornelison pawned the watch. We separated, and I saw Cornelison but once, a week later, in the company of a soldier, whom I understand to have been a deserter from the Marine Corps. I do not know the present whereabouts of Cornelison.

*C. S. Becker*